

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
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FM AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3928
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INFO AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
HQ, USSOUTHCOM, SCJ2
USCOMSOLANT

C O N F I D E N T I A L MONTEVIDEO 2052

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, PINT, PINS, UY
SUBJECT: NAVY SHAKE-UP

REF: MONTEVIDEO 1909 (NOTAL) (DTG 191741Z MAY 77),
US DAO IR 6900 0052 77

1. SUMMARY. SOME OF THE 41 SENIOR NAVAL OFFICERS GIVEN CHOICE BETWEEN RETIRING VOLUNTARILY OR BEING INVOLUNTARILY RETIRED ARE RESISTING. THEY HAVE ENGAGED LAWYER (AND FORMER PRESIDENT) WASHINGTON BELTRAN TO REPRESENT THEM IN POSSIBLE LEGAL ACTION. ONE CAPTAIN HAS INFORMED THE DATT THAT HE AND SOME OTHERS REFUSING TO RETIRE VOLUNTARILY HAVE BEEN ORDERED TO PRESENT THEMSELVES TO NAVAL UNITS FOR TEN DAYS' ARREST, PERHAPS AS WARNING TO DISCOURAGE FURTHER RESISTANCE. NOTHING HAS BEEN REPORTED TO DATE IN THE MEDIA HERE.

2. DAO SOURCES INDICATE THAT THE 41 SENIOR OFFICERS BEING FORCIBLY RETIRED BY THE NAVY, DID NOT AGREE ON
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JOINT ACTION TO PROTEST THE MOVE AGAINST THEM.

3. WHILE SOME OFFICERS HAVE SUBMITTED LETTERS REQUESTING RETIREMENT, OTHERS APPARENTLY HAVE REFUSED. SOME, ACCORDING TO USIS PRESS SOURCES, HAVE HIRED LAWYER WASHINGTON BELTRAN TO REPRESENT THEM IN POSSIBLE LEGAL ACTION. BELTRAN IS NOT ONLY A LAWYER, BUT ALSO DIRECTOR OF "EL PAIS", URUGUAY'S

LARGEST CIRCULATION DAILY, AND A FORMER PRESIDENT OF URUGUAY, HAVING SERVED AS PRESIDENT OF THE COLLEGIAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENT IN THE 60'S. WE DO NOT KNOW WHAT LEGAL ACTION MIGHT BE TAKEN.

4. IN THE MEANTIME, THE NAVY HAS BEGUN TO ORDER THE ARREST OF AT LEAST SOME OF THE 41. ONE CAPTAIN, WHO HAD REFUSED TO RETIRE VOLUNTARILY, CALLED THE DATT TO SAY HE HAD RECEIVED ORDERS TO REPORT TO A NAVAL FACILITY FOR TEN DAYS "RIGOROUS DETENTION", A TERM USED TO INDICATE SOMETHING MORE SERIOUS THAN HOUSE ARREST, BUT STILL A PUNISHMENT FOR RELATIVELY MINOR OFFENSES. THAT SAME SOURCE SAID TWO OTHERS, ARE ALREADY UNDER DETENTION AND THREE MORE HAD RECEIVED SIMILAR INSTRUCTIONS TO PRESENT THEMSELVES AT NAVAL FACILITIES. THIS PROCESS COULD WELL BE A WARNING TO THOSE INVOLVED NOT TO PRESS THEIR CASE FURTHER.

5. THE ARMY HAS NOT MOVED TO RETIRE INVOLUNTARILY A LONG LIST OF COLONELS, BUT THREE GENERAL OFFICERS WHO HAVE BEEN UNASSIGNED FOR SOME TIME (FORMER CINC CHIAPPE POSSE, RODRIGUEZ AND GROSSI) HAVE BEEN ASKED TO RETIRE VOLUNTARILY. HAAHR

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Disposition Approved on Date:
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Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
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Disposition History: n/a
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